

ENERGY IMPACT ILLINOIS

Energy Impact Illinois Announces Interactive Tools and Financing for Homeowners to Make Energy Efficient Upgrades

Resources aim to give consumers the information they need to make decisions towards reducing energy consumption and lowering energy bills

CHICAGO – November 1, 2011 – Energy Impact Illinois today launched a personalized energy calculator and financial resources for Chicago area homeowners to help them make energy efficient improvements to their homes. The tools, now located at TheEnergyBills.org, will educate homeowners on their current energy usage, provide information on how to make smart energy efficiency investments and connect them with financial resources to make those investments a reality.

"Everyone knows that they will save money and energy if they retrofit their home or business, it is just hard to figure out how to make it happen," said Randy Blankenhorn, executive director of the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP), the lead agency behind Energy Impact Illinois. "Energy Impact Illinois simplifies the process with these new resources, which will help people get informed on their energy usage habits and learn ways to make smart energy efficient investments that fit within their budget."

The energy calculator, known as "MyHomeEQ," is a unique customized web tool that gives users real, up-to-date information on their home energy usage. The tool is a simple process that tells a user how they use energy, what can be done to lower utility bills while improving energy efficiency, and how to connect with the right resources and contractors needed to implement those actions.

MyHomeEQ integrates actual data from county assessors' offices and utility bills while incorporating a home's characteristics submitted by the user to develop an individual energy performance score. Users can then compare that score to similar homes in their area and explore steps that can improve their score, such as sealing air leaks or replacing outdated appliances with new energy efficient models.

"With winter approaching, people are more conscious of their energy costs," said Blankenhorn. "Our tools and resources will help customers understand how they use energy and how they can navigate the retrofit process, reduce expenses and make their home more comfortable."

In addition to MyHomeEQ, TheEnergyBills.org also features the Energy Impact Illinois Residential Loan Program, which includes financial resources from local credit unions and banks that can help homeowners make energy efficiency upgrades to their properties in affordable ways. Homeowners can take advantage of unsecured loan products at competitive rates to help finance energy efficiency improvement projects, with links to qualified contractors to do the work.

To learn more and to take advantage of MyHomeEQ and the Energy Impact Illinois Residential Loan program, and other potential energy efficiency resources, visit TheEnergyBills.org.

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About Energy Impact Illinois

Energy Impact Illinois is an alliance of local and federal organizations, utility companies and not-for-profit groups who are dedicated to helping communities change their energy usage habits, by offering access to a broad array of programs and solutions. The alliance provides people and businesses with smart, simple resources that make it easy to save energy and money for collective results. The alliance was formed as a result of an American Recovery and Reinvestment Act grant through the U.S. Department of Energy's Better Buildings Neighborhood Program to spur energy efficiency upgrades and create a long-term energy efficiency market in the region. For more information, visit: www.energyimpactillinois.org.

About BetterBuildings

BetterBuildings is a national program supported by the U.S. Department of Energy that is working to transform the marketplace for energy efficiency upgrades in homes, businesses, and institutions. BetterBuildings has provided seed funding to more than 40 energy efficiency programs across the country that are helping consumers and businesses reduce their energy use, save money, and support the development of local jobs. Learn more about BetterBuildings at www.betterbuildings.energy.gov.

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